

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

MAY 13, 2004

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on April 6, 2004, **FRANKLIN M. WALKER**, a/k/a “**Frank**,” age 39, of Pittsburg, Illinois, was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury sitting in Benton, Illinois, in a one-count indictment, charging him with conspiracy to manufacture 50 grams or more of methamphetamine. The violation took place between May 2003 and February 14, 2004, in Williamson County, Illinois. An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.

The conspiracy offense carries a penalty of between 5 and 40 years’ imprisonment, a fine of up to \$2,000,000, and a term of 4 years supervised release. WALKER is being held without bond pending his July 12, 2004, jury trial.

The investigation was conducted by the Southern Illinois Enforcement Group, Williamson County Sheriff’s Office, Marion Police Department, Illinois State Police and Drug Enforcement Administration pursuant to their participation in the Williamson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. Under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors are working together to prosecute drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms, and criminals that use firearms to commit violent offenses or drug trafficking offenses.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Amanda A. Robertson.